THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 17, 2012

The Honorable Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Affairs
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Madam Chairman:

Thank you for the work your committee has been doing surrounding the terrorist attacks on our compounds in Benghazi that killed four brave Americans.

The Accountability Review Board (ARB) that I appointed two months ago to examine those attacks has concluded its work and presented its final report to me. At my direction, the report in its entirety will be shared with your committee, and the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, tomorrow in advance of the Board's briefings to them on Wednesday. I also intend to make public as much of the report as possible, taking into account the need to safeguard classified and sensitive material in the ARB's report.

Thank you for welcoming Deputy Secretaries Burns and Nides to appear before your committee this week in my place to address your questions and the steps we are taking; I am very sorry that I will be unable to be there in person. As a former member, I believe it is important for senior officials to appear before Congress regularly, as I have done before both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee since becoming Secretary of State.

On a personal note, I am grateful for your kind words of concern for my health and the immediate understanding you shared when my Chief of Staff reached out to you on Saturday explaining that I would be unable to appear as I had hoped and planned.

I look forward to continuing the work we have done together these last four years and to engaging your committee in January so that we can address the tragic events that occurred in Libya and the measures that the State Department is taking in response – including how we are implementing the recommendations of the ARB and taking other actions I have ordered.

I can also update you at that time on our responses to the various events and trends unfolding in the broader Middle East, as well as other global matters of concern.

Since I was sworn in as Secretary of State, I have had the privilege of leading nearly 70,000 personnel worldwide. They are my responsibility. I have no greater priority than keeping them safe, and I intend to do all that I can to do so. You are an important partner in these efforts.

With best regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Hillary Rodham Clinton

cc: The Honorable John Kerry,
Chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations